



NEWS RELEASE

Today's Date: Monday, November 5, 2007, -- 07 - 048

District: District 2 - Redding

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Delays Expected Thanksgiving Weekend on Interstate 5 Pit River Bridge

REDDING – The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 2, advises motorists to prepare for moderate to major delays during the Thanksgiving Weekend, over the Pit River Bridge (a.k.a. The Veterans of Foreign Wars Memorial Bridge), 10 miles north of Redding on Interstate 5.

Operations on the emergency deck replacement project that began in June 2006 required reducing traffic to one lane in each direction and reducing speeds to 45 MPH. Added volume from holiday travelers combined with the current bridge construction could result in delays of 2 hours or more, with backups of 20 miles.

Conditions do not allow for opening additional lanes and Caltrans asks motorists to be patient, plan extra time to reach their destinations and choose off-peak times to travel.

Caltrans will use changeable message signs, highway advisory radio and the internet, at www.caltrans2.info to inform motorists of delay times and backups. During the busiest travel days, motorist can get real time updated information by calling the Pit River Bridge hotline at 530-225-3054.

Vehicle counts from Thanksgiving 2006, suggest motorists heeded last year's advisories. Total volume was lower than anticipated and many travelers chose off peak times to cross the bridge, lessening projected delays considerably.

*Estimates of delays and backups:

Wednesday, November 21, 2007

- NB I-5: Peak 2:30PM – 7:00PM, 20-30 minute delays, 4-5 mile backups
- SB I-5: Peak 2:30PM – 5:00PM, 8-9 minute delays, 1-2 mile backups

Thursday and Friday, November 22 and 23, 2007

- No significant delays

Saturday, November 24, 2007

- SB I-5: Peak 2:00PM – 9:00PM, 20-60 minute delays, 4-9 mile backups

Sunday, November 25, 2007

- NB I-5: Peak 12:00PM – 5:30PM, 4-18 minute delays, 1-4 mile backups
- SB I-5: Peak 12:00PM – 11:30PM, 20-120 minute delays, 3-18 mile backups



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What to do to make your trip more comfortable:

- Make sure your vehicle is in good working order, with a full tank of gas before starting your trip.
- Bring along water, snacks and something to occupy any children traveling with you.
- Charge your cell phone battery.
- Inform others of your planned destination, and let them know when you have arrived.

The California Highway Patrol will be enforcing speed limits and a service patrol contractor will be available to keep traffic flowing. The contractor can assist overheated vehicles with water, supply gasoline and/or tow disabled vehicles out of the roadway to keep traffic flowing.

Pit River Bridge Facts:

- Built in 1942 by the Bureau of Reclamation as part of the Central Valley Project. The bridge has a steel truss design supporting a concrete upper deck serving motorists and a lower railway used by Union Pacific Railroad.
- When built it was the highest double deck cantilever bridge in the world.
- 560 feet from road deck to river bottom
- The bridge is 3,588 feet long.
- It has average daily traffic volumes of more than 20,000 vehicles.
- The original 1915 Pit River Bridge remains submerged beneath the surface of Shasta Lake.

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NOTE: *An electronic version of this news release is available on the Internet at the following web address: <http://caltrans2.info/roadinfo.htm>*

